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MEMORANDUM

TO: Rules and Ordinances Committee, Malden City Council
Economic Development Committee, Malden City Council

FROM: Alex Pratt, Director
Zachery Lemel, Deputy Director of Planning and Economic Development
Elena Eimert, Senior Planner

COPY: Malden Planning Board

DATE: May 28, 2026

RE: #256-26 Communication from Mayor Christenson regarding an Economic Development Package Proposal

Introduction

In fall 2025, the City Council requested the Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD) to research regulatory changes that will increase economic development opportunity within Malden. In early 2026, City staff engaged business owners, entrepreneurs, real estate developers, and other stakeholders and experts to identify experienced obstacles and targeted opportunities for revenue generation and economic vibrancy in our City.

In May 2026, the Administration introduced three proposals to the City Council that came out of this research:

1. Allowed administrative approval for signs (Sign Control Ordinance – Sec. 4.16)
2. Modification to Historic Properties/Demo Delay Ordinance (Sec. 4.24)
3. Allow more commercial/industrial uses by-right in appropriate places (Zoning – Sec. 12.12)

A joint Economic Development and Rules & Ordinances Committee meeting on May 26, 2026 recommended the Sign Control Ordinance amendments to full Council, requested staff work with the Historic Commission for item two, and present zoning text for consideration at the next meeting for item three.

Allow more commercial/industrial uses by-right in appropriate places (Zoning – Sec. 12.12)

City staff received both constructive and positive feedback at previous Committee meetings regarding these zoning changes. Since these meetings, staff have modified the amendments to the use table and parking regulations due to pending litigation regarding cannabis regulations as follows:

- Remove proposed changes to Retail Sales, Warehouse, and Wholesale and Distribution

Staff plan to bring these amendments back for Council consideration following the conclusion of this court case. In addition, we recommend removing the changes to off-street parking requirements in Industrial Districts.

Proposed Amendments

Attached are the proposed amendments to the Use Table (Sec. 12.12) and Use Definitions (Sec. 12.32).

Next Steps

Following Committee discussion, OSPCD recommends the Committees vote to move these amendments for a joint public hearing with the Planning Board.

Order: Be it hereby ordained by the Malden City Council that the Code of the City of Malden (MCC) 12.12.030 USE REGULATIONS is hereby amended as follows:

For Club or Lodge, change “No” to “Yes” in column BN.

For Hospitals, change “No” to “SP” in columns I1 and I2.

For Motel-Hotel, change “SP” to “SPR” in columns BC, BH, I1, and I2.

For Medical Center, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BC, BH, I1, and I2.

For Recreation, Gainful Business, Secondary to Principal Club/Lodge, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BN, BC, BH, I1, and I2.

For Restaurant, “Fast Food” Service, that does not take call-ahead orders and is in excess of 1000 sq. ft. gross floor area, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns I1 and I2.

For Restaurant, All Other, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BH, I1, and I2.

For Body Art, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BN, BC, BH, I1, and I2.

For Convenience Store, change “SP” to “Yes” in column BH.

For Supermarket, change “SP” to “SPR” in columns BH, I1, and I2.

For Licensed Massage Therapist Salon, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BN, BC, and BH.

For Adult Day Health Center, change “SP” to “Yes” in column BH, I1, and I2.

For Kennel, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BH, I1, and I2.

For Research and Development, change “SP” to “Yes” in columns BC and BH.

Order: Be it hereby ordained by the Malden City Council that the Code of the City of Malden (MCC) 12.32.060 DEFINITIONS - ZONING is hereby amended to update the definition for Medical Center as follows:

Strike the existing Medical Center definition in its entirety and replace with:

'Medical Center: An entity, however organized, providing medical, surgical, dental, physical rehabilitation, mental health services, or medical aesthetics and cosmetic treatments and injections including, but not limited to testing, diagnosis, and/or for treatment of persons or animals, with or without a medical doctor on the premises, on an outpatient basis, not including provisions for overnight stays. Examples of services that a medical center may provide include, but are not limited to: blood draw; counseling; dental; dialysis; prenatal and post-natal care; swab-testing and related laboratory services; urinalysis; vaccinations; Botox injections and dermal fillers; IV wellness therapy. Medical centers are various types of healthcare facilities, including, but not limited to, the office of an individual practitioner, clinics and group practices; however, "Substance Abuse Treatment Center" and "Hospital" are specifically excluded from this definition. Medical Centers that are physically located within/part of institutions or entities, such as hospitals, schools or pharmacies, shall be considered accessory to the principal use. A special permit issued to a Medical Center is non-transferable and non-assignable. "Licensed Massage Therapy Salon", "Medical Marijuana Treatment Center" and "Adult Day Health Center" are specifically excluded from this definition.'